

Message Text

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14

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 STR-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO USDA/WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3397

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 0710

USDA PASS FAS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR

SUBJECT: CLAIMS OF SHORTWEIGHING - FOODGRAIN SHIPMENTS

1. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, A.P. SHINDE, HAS ASSURED MEMBERS OF THE LOK SABHA (LOWER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT) THAT INDIA WILL DEMAND COMPENSATION FROM THE U. S. IF THE CHARGES OF UNDER WEIGHING OF FOODGRAINS RECEIVED FROM THE UNITED STATES WERE PROVED CORRECT.

2. ACCORDING TO SEVERAL INDIAN NEWSPAPER REPORTS, MR. SHINDE TOLD THE MP'S THAT THE INDIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASCERTAIN THE FACTS FOLLOWING DISCLOSURE IN THE U. S. THAT SOME COMPANIES HAD SUPPLIED LESS QUANTITY OF FOODGRAINS THAN DECLARED TO INDIA AND AFRICA.

3. MR. SHINDE REFERRED TO PRESS REPORTS OF THE DEPOSITION BY A LOWER LEVEL EMPLOYEE OF BUNGE CORPORATION THAT THE COMPANY WAS RESORTING TO SHORT WEIGHMENTS OF FOODGRAIN SHIPS BOUND FOR INDIA AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES FROM THEIR ELEVATOR AT DESTREHAN.

4. HE SAID IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO HAVE AN INDEPENDENT CHECK ON THE SHIPMENTS BECAUSE ACCORDING TO LAW UNIFORMLY APPLICABLE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALL EXPORTING COUNTRIES, THE INSPECTION WAS DONE AT THE EX-

PORTERS END AND CERTIFICATION BY THE INSPECTOR WOULD HAVE TO BE ACCEPTED BY IMPORTERS. ACCORDING TO SHINDE, INDIA HAD IN THE PAST PROPOSED CHECKING BY AN INDEPENDENT AGENCY BUT WAS ADVISED THAT CERTIFICATION BY SUCH AN AGENCY WOULD NOT BE LEGALLY VALID. ASKED WHETHER A RANDOM CHECK AT DESTINATION WAS POSSIBLE HE SAID THERE WERE NO FACILITIES FOR AUTOMATIC WEIGHING AT INDIAN PORTS. A ROUGH ESTIMATE COULD BE MADE BUT PRECISE WEIGHT COULD NOT BE ASCERTAINED. AS FOR COMPENSATION, HE NOTED THAT THE COURT CASES WERE STILL ON AND ALLEGATION OF UNDERWEIGHTMENT HAD NOT YET BEEN PROVEN. ASSUMING IT IS PROVEN, HOWEVER, HE WAS QUOTED AS SAYING INDIA WILL DEFINITELY ASK FOR COMPENSATION.
SAXBE

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